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THE

BEAUHARNOIS CANAL

QUESTION.



MONTREAL:

"HERALD" STEAM PRESS.

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THE BEAUHARNOIS CANAL QUESTION.

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS.

The idea of constructing a canal to avoid the Rapids at the Cascades, the Cedars, and the Coteau, originated at a very early period in the history of Canada.

It appears that while the Colony was under the rule of France, according to the able Report submitted by the Hon. Mr. Chapais immediately before the Confederation of the Provinces, four stone-built locks were located at the Rapids alluded to, having a depth of two and a half feet of water on the sills, and through which *bateaux* carrying from thirty to forty barrels of flour were towed. These works were probably constructed at a period approaching the close of French rule in this country; for, as far back as the year 1721, no mention appears of them in the narrative given by Charlevoix of his voyage from Montreal to Kingston in a bark canoe, although he particularly alludes to the Cedar Rapids, "a name given to those rapids, he says, in consequence of the thick growth of cedar trees on the bank of the river; but, since which time they have almost entirely disappeared." For a long time after the cession of this country to Great Britain, these works were known as the "Old French Locks."

In 1804, the Imperial authorities caused a considerable improvement to be made in the locks at Coteau and at the Cascades. A canal half a mile long, with three locks, instead of the "Old French Locks," was cut at the Cascades.

In 1817, all those locks were enlarged by the Royal Staff Corps, with a view to permit the passage of *bateaux* carrying from eighty to a hundred barrels of flour,

and from that time, those works were designated "the military canals."

About the year 1832 a sum of \$40,405.83 was expended, partly in the construction of a new canal about a quarter of a mile long, at the Cedars Village, and partly in the construction of another canal commenced at the same time a little above the lock and Village of Coteau du Lac. This latter undertaking was only completed in the year 1841 by a Mr. McBain, its length being two-thirds of a mile with one lock—a wooden construction—measuring 120 feet in length by 15 feet in width, with a depth of four feet of water on the sills.

At this period, colonization had just commenced in the vast prairies of the West—the first houses were then being erected on the site now occupied by that wonderful city—Chicago; and about the same time the fact began to be recognised that the St. Lawrence was naturally destined to become the great highway and outlet for the immense products of the West. And yet the most perspicuous mind could scarcely foresee that within the next thirty years it would be necessary to construct canals capable of allowing the passage of vessels drawing twelve feet of water.

From 1830 to 1844, public attention was occasionally directed towards the question of the improvement of the navigation of the St. Lawrence. The administrative authorities became convinced that the future prosperity of the country depended largely upon the future construction of canals. Surveys were accordingly made, resulting in our present chain of canals.

At that period of time, as well as at the present, the difficulty of choice between the north and south sides of the river, to avoid the Rapids of the Cascades, the Cedars and Coteau, was seriously felt. Opinions were divided, but I believe I am strictly within the bounds of truth when I state that all the surveys made were in favour of the south bank, whether considered in regard to trade and navigation, or reviewed from a stand point of economy.

The line on the south bank was finally selected in 1842; the works were commenced in the same year, and on the 11th of October, 1845, the Beauharnois Canal was opened for public traffic.

Since that time the question of constructing a canal at the Cedars, on the north bank of the river, has scarcely been heard of. In fact, Mr. Masson, ex-member of Parliament for Soulanges, is about the only person who has occasionally taken the trouble to air his opinions on the subject; but it is well understood that he only agitates the question in the individual interests of certain inhabitants of that locality.

It required all the energy and enterprising spirit of the present member for Soulanges to revive the old question of a North Shore Canal. Mr. Lanthier was the candidate of the partisans of this proposed canal; he was returned in order to become the champion of this desperate cause. And, as he states in a letter published in the *Minerve* of 24th March last, his first political act was "to induce the executive Government to repair the error committed in the year 1842."

Mr. Lanthier has left no stone unturned to obtain his object. Thanks to the support given him in the editorial articles of the *Minerve* [written by Mr. Oscar Dunn, a native of Soulanges, with numerous interests there], and a member of the deputation from the county who recently waited upon the Government to point out the great value of the advantages possessed by the north bank of the river, the question of a canal at the Cedars has become the order of the day.

Of course the example of such an influential Government organ, was sure to find imitators who are ignorant as to what takes place behind the scenes.

Petitions recommending this enterprise were at the same time printed and circulated for signatures all over the country. Some of them being filled with names of parties interested in steamboat navigation—names easily obtained—and then forwarded to the

representative from Soulanges at Ottawa, who immediately there sets up a hue and cry that the trade of the country requires the construction of a new canal at the Cedars, on the north side of the river, instead of the enlargement of the Beauharnois Canal.

In the face of all this intriguing, these efforts, and the various influences brought to bear against their acquired rights and interests, the inhabitants of the County of Beauharnois determined to have those rights and interests appraised before the country. At a public meeting held at Valleyfield, (who took the initiative) I was requested to take charge and sustain those interests.

As a native of the County of Beauharnois, I could not refuse to undertake the honourable task imposed upon me, all important though it was. I took up the cause gratuitously, and commenced its defence, and I will continue to do so with all the energy I possess. A lively discussion took place between Messrs. Lanthier, Harwood, [members for Vaudeville], L. H. Masson, [former representative of Soulanges] and Dr. Fortier of St. Clet, and myself, in the same journal which opened the campaign in favour of a north shore canal. It is the substance of this discussion which I now desire to sum up in this pamphlet.

The motives by which I am actuated in this matter are variously judged by my opponents; some supposing that I am influenced by personal lauded interests. But I here declare that I have no such interests; it is long since I disposed of the land I once owned in that district. Others, again, suspect me of aiming at a seat in the House of Commons as the representative of the County of Beauharnois in place of the present member, Mr. Robillard. The best answer to this is: Lot those who think so consult Mr. Robillard himself on the subject—no doubt he will satisfy them. Besides, I may say that the majority which carried my opponent into Parliament at the last election in the County of Jacques Cartier was not sufficiently large to justify me in despairing of success in a future contest of that County.

I have no particular interest in this discussion beyond that of wishing to be useful to my native County, the inhabitants of which have, in a special manner, solicited my services under the circumstances. And I will add that if that particular interest were opposed to the general interests of the country at large, I would deem it my duty at least to maintain silence. It is because I am firmly convinced that the cause of the

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County of Beauharnois is equally the cause of the whole country, that I submit these remarks to the public—remarks which are based not upon the statements or affidavits of persons residing in the localities under discussion, but upon evidence obtained from official and authentic sources. And I feel confident every disinterested reader will easily perceive that all the *clatter* raised on this subject proceeds from parties who have no other end to serve their private interest.

HISTORICAL PART OF THE QUESTION.

1. The Hon. Mr. Killaly is reported to have said, in 1842, that the first survey in connection with this enterprise had been made about twenty years previously—say in 1822—by a French engineer, who, after having examined both sides of the river, located the work on the south side. "This gentleman's report," added the Chairman of the Department of Public Works, "I have not been able to obtain; but the result of it, as stated, I have had from highly respectable authority."

The Hon. Mr. Harwood subsequently affirmed that Mr. Killaly was in error; "for," he said, "as far as I can learn, the survey alluded to was made by a Canadian surveyor and not a French engineer, and that survey was at the expense of the Seigneur of Beauharnois, and was confined to the south side."

2. Three different surveys were made on the north bank of the river in 1833, by Mr. J. B. Mills, with whom were associated Mr. David Thompson and Mr. Samuel Keefer, (the latter having been subsequently appointed Engineer-in-Chief of the Department) under the direction of the Commissioners of Public Works, which included Messrs. Harwood and DeBeaujeu [respective proprietors of Vaudreuil and Soulanges] both of which gentlemen it is well understood were in favour of constructing a canal on the north bank of the river.

These three different routes were examined and compared; and, notwithstanding the admission by Mr. Mills that a canal on the south side of the river was very *feasible*, he recommended, for military reasons, a north-shore route—starting from McDonald's Point, near the residence of Mr. Simpson, [then member for the county] at present occupied by Mr. Q. DeBeaujeu, and coming out at the Cascades, running through 6½ miles of artificial canal, and 7 4-5th miles of navigable river.

This line was approved by Mr. Wright, the celebrated Erie engineer, who, in concert with Mr. Mills, had surveyed and recommended the construction of the Cornwall canal; and, strange to say, this line was selected, although Mr. Mills considered that the south bank, geographically speaking, was "the most natural and direct route for a canal." "I have to remark," said Mr. David Thompson before the Special Committee in 1842, "that the view of the formation of a canal, from Lake St. Francis to Lake St. Louis, was then (1833) founded upon the belief of those engineers, that steamboats, for every purpose of passage or freight, would entirely supersede the use of all other kind of vessels. Time and experience have proved the contrary; therefore the estimates they made for a navigation by steamboats, of 6½ miles in canal, and 7 4-5 miles in river, of strong current for steamboats, is a failure; and it is now acknowledged that, for vessels of 9 feet water, a continuous canal from Lake St. Francis to Lake St. Louis is required."

Mr. Mills further remarks in his report:—"There is a political objection to its being located on the south side of the St. Lawrence which I will barely name. The work in contemplation must be considered national in its character, therefore, it ought to be so located as to be less in danger of foreign invasion."

It was from this point of view that Mr. Wright supported Mr. Mills in his opinion.

Mr. Casey's reasoning is similar to that of Mr. Mills. He says, "The whole case may be stated thus: the great (that is the commercial) objects of the work will be equally well accommodated on either side, with, of course, equally efficient canals. In a military point of view, the canal on the north side would be national, whilst, on the south side, it might not only become useless, but might actually be turned against the country. Hence a trifling difference in cost should not be considered in the decision."

On the 10th February, 1834, a Committee of the House of Assembly of Lower Canada adopted Mr. Mills' report; but it does not appear that any steps were taken to carry it into effect.

It is Mr. Mills' route which the present partisans of the north shore canal (among whom are Mr. Lanthier, member for Soulanges, and Mr. Harwood, member for Vaudreuil) desire to see adopted by the Dominion Parliament. This route was surveyed under the special directions of Messrs.

Harwood and DeBeaujeu (both personally interested in the north shore canal), and was selected without any examination having been made on the south side of the river, but was recommended solely from the military point of view which prevailed over all other considerations at the time the survey was made. What weight should such a report have at the present time, when *commercial* interests and considerations are deemed to be all-important in the examination of public works of this nature?

3. In the months of September and October 1834, Mr. Alexander Stevenson accompanied by Mr. Trudeau, surveyed the south bank of the river at the joint request of the Commissioners of Public Works for Lower Canada and of the Hon. Edward Ellis. His report made on the 10th February 1835, was in favor of the line of the present Beauharnois Canal. It does not appear that Mr. Stevenson examined the north bank of the river at that time; but he did so subsequently and in the same year at the request of Messrs. Harwood and Simpson, and the opinion he gave those gentlemen was, that a canal on the north bank of the river would cost a great deal more than one on the south bank.

In 1842, speaking of those two routes before the Special Committee, Mr. Stevenson said:—"I have seen Mr. Mills' Report and estimate, and from what knowledge I have of that side of the country, I must say that I cannot approve of the route chosen by that gentleman."

The opinion of this engineer deserves public attention and respect. His reputation for strict integrity was such, that even after being employed and paid by Mr. Ellis, his services were secured by Messrs. Harwood and Simpson, two of the warmest partisans for the construction of a north-shore canal.

Mr. Lanthier reproaches Mr. Stevenson for having received payment from Mr. Ellis. It is universally known that the Seigneur of Beauharnois used all his influence and availed himself of every legitimate means at his command to secure the construction of the Beauharnois Canal. However, this is not an exceptional case. In fact *private* interests are found to exist at the bottom of all extensive undertakings; but it is not fair to argue from such premises that *public* interests are of necessity neglected. Who would dare to say, for instance, that the Pacific Railway enterprise is in bad hands because Sir Hugh Allan and his friends

have obtained the contract for its construction?

4. A sixth survey was made in 1834, for the Seigneur of Beauharnois, by Mr. N. H. Baird, a member of the London Engineers Society. He also shared in the opinion that the south shore was the best adapted for a canal; but, going further than Mr. Stevenson, he suggested the propriety of utilising the small river St. Louis, on the score of economy. This suggestion was not generally approved of, owing to the length of the route—fifteen miles; but the superior advantages of the south shore were nevertheless acknowledged.

5. In 1836, Messrs. A. La Rue and Henry G. Thompson made another survey, under the directions of a Special Commission, presided over by Mr. Jno. Jones. The examination of the two Lakes was entrusted to Mr. La Rue, while Mr. Thompson applied himself to that of the St. Lawrence; and the opinion of those gentlemen was not unfavourable to the south shore canal. Their survey never having been entirely completed, the Commission made no report.

However, Mr. Jones informed the Special Committee, appointed in 1842, that his colleagues and himself had agreed to recommend Mr. Mill's route, from Coteau to the Cedars, and a continuous line along the river bank from the Cedars to the Cascades. "The lower part of this route," Mr. Jones said, "that is, from Pointe-au-Moulin to Pointe-a-Coulange, recommended by Mr. Mills, was condemned by the Commission, there not being sufficient water."

6. In 1838 Colonel Phillpotts received instructions from Lord Durham to proceed with a survey of the localities in question. This gentleman's opinion was that the canal should be located on the north side of the river, purely from military considerations. "I am, however, induced to believe," says the Colonel, "that, in any case, it may be found possible to construct a canal on the south shore cheaper than on the north."

7. In 1839 Mr. David Thompson was authorised to make a new survey. This also resulted in favor of the construction of the present Beauharnois Canal.

In the same year (1839) the Department of Public Works having been requested to select a route for recommendation from the reports then submitted by engineers, represented to the Governor-General:—"That having carefully examined the reports and plans and estimates of Messrs. Baird and Stevenson on the practicability of constructing the said canal through the

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Seigniorly of Beauharnois, and those of Mr. J. B. Mills for the same through the Seigniories of Soulanges and Vaudreuil, they find themselves unable to arrive at any conclusive opinion on this subject for the want of more information."

"The Board find that the Engineers who have been employed to report on these routes have confined themselves in their examinations, each to his own side of the river, and consequently that no investigation by a professional person has been made as to their comparative merits."

For these reasons the Department recommended the making of a new survey.

Notwithstanding all the reports submitted, accompanied as they were by maps, plans, specifications and estimates, the old Legislative Assembly of Lower Canada failed to arrive at any decision in the matter. At this particular juncture, the country, unfortunately, was too much disturbed by internal and political dissensions to be able to give serious attention to a great question of political economy, and consequently the canal question was left in abeyance. A Legislative Union of Upper and Lower Canada was necessary to revive the matter, and to bring this grand national enterprise to a successful issue. The Cornwall canal, commenced in 1834, retarded in its progress by the rebellion in 1837, was almost completed; and the construction of a canal which would unite the waters of Lake St. Francis with Lake St. Louis, was but its indispensable sequence.

8. In 1841 an estimate of the cost of a canal by the "Mills' Route" (prepared by Samuel Keefer) was laid before the House of Assembly, the total cost of which amounted to £255,900. In presenting this estimate, Mr. Keefer stated that if the south side of the river were selected for the location of this canal, a saving of at least £50,000 would be effected. And in 1842 Mr. Killaly stated before the Special Committee that this estimate was presented with the distinct understanding that the canal was to be located on the south side. Moreover, it is well known that Lord Sydenham then recommended the south shore as being the best for the construction of the canal.

9. Under all the circumstances, and considering the contradictory nature of the various reports submitted, the Government resolved that a new survey should be made, superintended by some disinterested person. This task was naturally entrusted to Mr. Keefer, Engineer-in-Chief of the Department, a gentleman known to be

utterly disinterested one way or the other in the locality. In the month of January, 1842, therefore, Mr. Keefer was instructed to survey both sides of the river, and to report upon the best route with as little delay as possible. In this survey he was assisted by Mr. Cowley.

On the 17th February following, Mr. Keefer reported to the Department, remarking: "The best route to unite the waters of these two Lakes has long been a subject of consideration with me. You are aware that I assisted Mr. Mills in the survey of the three routes on the north side, and should, therefore, have a perfect knowledge of them; and I have now no hesitation in expressing the opinion that Mr. Stevenson's route, or one corresponding very nearly with it, will be found not only the cheapest but the best in every respect."

10. This report was, moreover, confirmed by Mr. Chas. M. Tate, who was instructed by the Department to examine the south channel of the river at points lying between Grande Isle, St. Timothee, and Valleyfield. In his report Mr. Tate says:—"I beg to conclude with one general observation: Considering the distance between the two levels of water in the Lakes, and the extent of the fall which has to be overcome, it appears as if nature had in a singular degree, made compensation for the great impediments in the watercourse, by affording on the land by its side unusual facilities for establishing at a moderate expense, an efficient and permanent artificial navigation."

11. With a view to forming his own estimate of the value of the objections raised by the Seigneurs of Vaudreuil and Soulanges, and by Mr. Simpson, the county member, against the contemplated south shore canal, the Chairman of the Board of Works deemed it his duty to accompany Mr. Keefer over the most important portions of the survey he was about to make on that side of the river. This was Mr. Killaly's second visit to the locality in question, his first having been made in 1840. A most experienced engineer—familiar with all the features of the north bank of the river—a stranger in the country, and therefore free from local prejudices of any kind whatever—Mr. Killaly's opinion was not only worthy of all respect, but of itself it was an authority. He pronounced in favour of the route recommended by Messrs. Stevenson and Keefer: "I declare," he said before the Special Committee, "upon the honour of a gentleman, that my firm belief, after having anxiously reflected upon this subject for

more than a year, entirely concurs with the opinion of those gentlemen." Consequently, on the 13th June, 1842, the Executive Council adopted the route of the present Beauharnois canal; and, on the same day, the action of the Council was confirmed by the Governor-General.

The announcement of this decision, followed by the immediate commencement of the works—with a view to retain the hundreds of emigrants then arriving in the Province—fell like a thunder-bolt upon the inhabitants of the north shore of the river. The contest between the residents of the north and south sides of the river, which had hitherto been of a very lively nature, now became a furious war.

The Counties of Soulanges and Vaudreuil, at all times protesting their disinterestedness in the matter, now set themselves most violently in opposition to the Seignior of Beauharnois. From 1834 to 1842 Messrs. P. T. Masson and G. Beaudet (representatives of the County) and Messrs. DeBeaujeu and Harwood (Seigneurs of Vaudreuil and Soulanges) left no stone unturned in their attempts to secure the object they had in view.

The indignation manifested by those interested gentlemen, when the Government decision on this question was announced, may be better imagined than described. Agitation daily increased until it rose to the highest pitch, encouraged as it was by the most influential men in the districts, led by the Harwoods, the De Beaus, the Simpsons, the Beaudets, the Massons, the Ducketts, the Peases, the McIntyres, the Duncans, the St. Amour, the Roys and others. A monster meeting was held at Coteau-du-Lac on the 29th June, 1842, at which were present, the Hon. Mr. Harwood, Capt. McQuaig, Dr. Loy, Messrs. Simpson, M.P.M. Intyre, Reebuck, McPherson, Birmingham, Watters, Peas, Wilson, Beaudry, Duclos, &c. Resolutions were adopted against the proposed canal on the south bank of the river, and a committee was appointed to present an address to the Governor-General to the same effect. Before dispersing, the meeting "bound themselves to endeavour by every constitutional means in their power to arrest the progress of the work."

The scheme proposed to be carried out by this meeting had been previously arranged at a *caucus* or private preliminary meeting. It may be interesting to reproduce here a few of the principal resolutions

submitted at that *caucus*, as published in the *Montreal Gazette* of 7th July, 1842:—

"CANDID RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT A PRIVATE PRELIMINARY MEETING AT COTEAU-DU-LAC, CONCERNING THE BEAUHARNOIS CANAL :

1st. "That the immediate object of this meeting is to bully the Board of Works, and gammon the Governor-General, about the Beauharnois Canal, to the end that the works there may be suspended, and time gained for further agitation."

2nd. "That with respect to the ultimate object of this meeting, there exists a division of opinion amongst us; those who are interested in pilotage, towage and insurance, being desirous that the unsafe navigation between Lake St. Francis and Lake St. Louis, may remain as it is; while the proprietors thereof want a large outlay of public money in making a canal from Coteau-du-Lac to the Cascades, through the Seigniories of Soulanges and Vaudreuil; but that both parties fully and cordially agree in wishing, at all events, to defeat the plan of the Beauharnois Canal."

3rd.—"That it is unnecessary to be very particular as to the means by which the objects of this meeting shall be pursued."

5th.—"That it is expedient to hold public meetings of persons in putting a stop to the Beauharnois Canal, for the purpose of passing resolutions against the said canal, and in favour of a canal on this side of the St. Lawrence."

7th.—"That in order to create a prejudice against the Beauharnois Canal, it is expedient to pass, at the said intended public meetings, a resolution declaring that it would be, from its geographical position, very expensive and difficult to prevent the said canal from falling into the possession of the enemy; when, instead of enabling us to keep the superiority of Lakes St. Francis and St. Louis, and along the St. Lawrence, our natural defence, the enemy might fit up war steamers and other craft and make a formidable descent on the Island of Montreal endangering the city, and cutting off the communication with the Rideau Canal" (In fact such a resolution was passed at the public meeting held on the 29th June.) For that, by holding up such images of danger timid people may be alarmed; and that with respect to the

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"rence is the "natural" boundary between
"Canada and the United States, and with
"respect to the injustice and cowardice of
"proclaiming that the British Empire can-
"not protect its subjects on the south side
"of the St. Lawrence, that is not our affair,
"except in so far as we think that the less
"is said about it the better."

"8th.—That at the said intended public
"meetings, when boldly asserting that the
"entrance of the Beauharnois Canal is 'full
"of shoals and very bad,' and when holding
"up the aforesaid images of danger in order
"to alarm the timid, it will be expedient to
"profess that we have no private interests to
"serve—nothing to loose or to gain by what
"may happen in this matter except as pat-
"riotic Canadians—but that our sole aim is,
"that the public, for whom we feel a deep
"regard, may obtain the best, and cheapest,
"and safest canals; for that though such
"professions coming from us of the pilot
"interest, and the towing interest, and the
"Customs officers interest, and the Sou-
"langes and Vaudreuil Seigniorly interests,
"may not be implicitly believed, yet they
"will cost nothing and may go down with
"some."

True to the programme adopted by the
leaders of this movement, they caused peti-
tions to be circulated broadcast over the
country, to which were affixed the signa-
tures of the farmers and residents in the
seigniories of Soulanges and Vaudreuil,
as well as those of residents in the county
of Glengarry. One of the clauses in that
memorable document sets forth "That a
system of favoritism has been dealt out to
the detriment of the public interest, and
with a wasteful expenditure of the people's
money; that they therefore pray witnesses
may be examined and a full investigation
of the case may be gone into; and that a
naval and land survey may be made on
both sides of the river by disinterested and
competent persons unconnected with the
Board of Works, (in which they must de-
clare their want of confidence), and that the
prosecution of this vast work may be
stayed until such Report is made to, and
determined on by, your honorable House."

At the same time, Mr. Simpson, the then
representative of the county, also forwarded
a solemn protest to the Government. And,
as if the more boldly to encounter the
Chairman of the Board of Works at the
opening of Parliament, he and Mr. Harwood

retained the services of Mr. Casey, a civil
engineer from New York, who had for some
years been employed on various surveys in
both Provinces of Canada. This gentle-
man travelled hurriedly over the route on
the north bank of the river, without taking
time to make calculations. As a faithful
servant, understanding well the objects
and desires of his masters, Mr. Casey de-
clared that the Government had committed
a grave error with regard to the location of
the canal.

Mr. Simpson's protest having been com-
municated to Mr. Killaly, the latter replied
in part as follows :—"All these several
lines of levels in the Board's possession,
taken from the year 1833 to the present,
and crossing the country in all directions—
the information derived from their engineer,
who is intimately acquainted with the
locality—especially of the north side—
having been at the time Mr. Mills' assistant
in the surveys—the very satisfactory nature
of the documents of Mr. Stevenson in favor
of the canal on the south side, the full cor-
roboration of those documents by Messrs.
Baird, Keefer and Tate, together with my
whole general acquaintance with the coun-
try and nature of the strata, fully convinced
me long since, that the south side was the
proper site upon which the canal should be
constructed."

12.—The resolution of the Canadian Gov-
ernment having been transmitted to Eng-
land on the 19th July, was approved by the
Imperial Government on the 26th August.
In his despatch to the Governor General on
the subject Lord Stanley, the Colonial Sec-
retary, remarks :—"I confess that it is not
without regret that I assent to the sacri-
fice of the military advantages which would
have resulted from carrying the canal on
the north bank; but I am bound to admit
that on the grounds stated by you the in-
convenience will be considerably less than
would at first sight appear."

13.—It should be observed here, that
the site selected by Government for this
canal, received the approbation of the entire
Trade of Montreal and Quebec, and of the
press of the whole country, more particu-
larly the *Montreal Gazette*, the *Montreal*
Times, *La Minerve*, and *L'Aurore*. The old
Quebec Gazette and the *Montreal Herald* were
the only journals who were adverse to the
enterprise.

The *Montreal Gazette* of 7th July 1842
said :—"We think the inhabitants on the
north shore do perfectly right in holding

meetings and passing resolutions in what concerns their local interest, if they think they can gain anything by those proceedings and have any tangible grounds of opposition to the course resolved upon by the Executive Council. That opposition, however, to have the slightest chance of being available, must be based upon honesty and truth. This is not the case with all who have mingled in this controversy."

The Montreal Board of Trade even deemed it proper to petition the Governor General for the immediate prosecution of the work.

14.—One word in reference to the hurried survey of the Public-Works-neglected-place-hunter, Mr. Casey. It must be stated that he did not examine the several routes which had been recommended from time to time—that he did not even take the trouble to make an estimate of the cost of a canal on the north bank of the river—that he made no survey whatever in the south bank, to which he was almost a total stranger. His principal and sole object appears to have been to criticise Mr. Killaly's Report with a desire to see it rejected by the House at its approaching session. These facts cannot be denied, for Mr. Casey himself has admitted them in his examination as a witness, before the Special Committee, appointed by the Legislature in 1842. For example:—*Question 295.* "Were you employed by Mr. Simpson and Mr. Harwood to survey the line of a canal on the north side, and do you consider that you have furnished them with the proper estimates, surveys, and professional data to commence the said canal?" *Answer.* I was employed by them, but I have not furnished them with those things?" *Question 296.* "What do you consider then is the precise value of the information that you furnished to Mr. Simpson and Mr. Harwood?" *Answer.* That the difference in the cost of the canal on the two sides can be but a fraction of a hundred thousand pounds." *Question 301.* "Is the map of the ravine line submitted by you correct?" *Answer.* The map is not correct, but the profile is." *Question 305.* "State the reasons why you have not correctly laid down the course of the ravine on the map?" *Answer.* I had no time to spare, and thought it could have no bearing whatever, worthy of notice, on the question at issue." *Question 312.* "You state that the map was made contrary to your own wish; by whose desire was it made?" *Answer.* By desire of Mr. Harwood—I considered a map quite unneces-

sary in the case." *Question 92.* "Have you examined the western terminus of the canal, between Isle-aux-Chats and the main shore?" *Answer.* I have examined it, but not thoroughly." *Question 108.* "Will you state to the Committee your opinion of the relative merits of the eastern termini on both sides of the Lake St. Louis, touching the expense of making the entrance, and the period of formation and breaking up of the ice?" *Answer.* Of that I have no knowledge personally." *Question 43.* "Which would you call the lee shore of Lake St. Francis?" *Answer.* The south or east side. I speak from experience acquired on the south side of the St. Lawrence, at Laprairie in 1834-35-36." *Question 299.* "State distinctly whether you have a full and detailed estimate of what it would cost to make a canal on the north side of the river?" *Answer.* I have not." *Question 102.* "Are there rivers of equal extent on the south side to those on the north known as Riviere a De L'Isle, Qiviers Rouge, and Riviere-a-la-Graisse?" *Answer.* I cannot answer that question at present." *Question 119.* "What would, in your opinion, be the probable expense of continuing the canal to a point in the Lake, which would afford a good entrance?" *Answer.* I cannot answer that question."

In fact, Mr. Casey's labours were found to have been so incomplete and unsatisfactory, that he was forced to admit the impossibility of making a report for his patrons.

Shortly after the session of Parliament opened, a motion was made by Mr. Simpson, seconded by the Hon. George Moffatt, asking for the appointment of a Special Committee to investigate the conduct of the Board of Works in reference to the Beauharnois Canal. A committee composed of Messrs. Merritt, Cameron, Parent, McNabb, Dunscomb and the mover and seconder, was named; an amendment to the motion, to increase the number of the Committee to nine was rejected. The investigation then proceeded regularly, and Mr. Killaly was put upon his trial. Ministers, members of Parliament, engineers, pilots, merchants, farmers,—in short, persons from all ranks known, or supposed to possess information on this canal question, were indiscriminately summoned to appear before the Committee. The celebrated Indian *Gros Jacques*, the first pilot who conducted a steamer ("Lord Sydenham") down the rapids from Prescott to Montreal, was summoned to give evidence. Even Dr. Loy, from Coteau, was

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consulted on the occasion. The most flagrant contradictions appear in the evidence taken, some of the witnesses making statements which subsequently proved to be utterly false. Notwithstanding the Committee was composed of gentlemen of Mr. Simpson's own selecting, they reported, on the 12th October, 1842:—"That after a most patient and careful investigation upon the important subject referred to them, your committee find themselves unable to form any conclusive opinion, owing to the peculiar nature of the subject matter to be enquired into, and to the contradictory statements, both from the practical and scientific men whose evidence or opinions have been heard or referred to in the course of the enquiry."

In the meantime, the Beauharnois Canal—commenced in July, 1842—was completed in October, 1845; and from that time till the year 1870 nothing more was heard of the Cedars Canal.

16. With the filling up of the original small canals, the once flourishing north shore trade gradually declined, until it finally became completely prostrated; and, according to Mr. Masson, in a letter recently addressed to the *Minerve*, that trade has never since revived. "All we," says Mr. Masson, "who have had our properties ruined, and who have not had restitution made to the extent of one-half the amount of loss we have already incurred, and from the effects of which we still continue to suffer, through the ignorance and dishonesty of engineers who, under Mr. Wakefield's magnetic influence, advised the construction of a canal on the south side of the river, when they well knew that its natural course lay on the north side of the rapids," &c., &c. The magnetic influence of Mr. Wakefield!!! But is Mr. Masson ignorant of the fact that Mr. Wakefield was one of the most admired friends of the *Gazette* and *Minerve*? Is he not aware that when he offered himself as a candidate for Parliament in Nov. 1842, the *Minerve* introduced him to the world as a man possessed of "transcendent talents" of "honest proclivities," and capable of wield- ing "most salutary influence," *un homme de talents transcendants, de dispositions honnetes, et d'une influence salutaire*.

As to the present efforts on the part of the inhabitants of the north shore, to obtain the construction of a new canal on their side of the river instead of the proposed enlarge- ment of the Beauharnois Canal, they are not content with the incessant labours of their worthy representatives in the House of Commons—Messrs. Lanthier and Har-

wood. Faithful to the mission of his pre- decessors, a medical gentleman in one of the parishes of Soulanges—Dr. Fortier, of St. Clet—throws himself might and main into the discussion. Mr. Masson appeals warmly to his friends in Parliament, while, to assure the success of their cause, the powerful voice of Mr. Cauchon is invoked, a man who can discern nothing but contracts from any point of view, and whose gruntings have been heard throughout the country during the past few days. A more fatal death-blow could not be dealt to the Cedars canal; for everything touched by this shameless politician is certain to be soiled.

As an evidence that the present agitation of this question takes its rise in the County of Soulanges, it may be stated that the Government Commission addressed to Sir Hugh Allan, P. Garneau and others, on the 16th Nov., 1870, does not contain a single sentence in reference thereto. Mr. Masson is the only individual who has alluded to it. With the exception of this honourable gentleman, the various Boards of Trade and the other memorialists, among whom are such names as Messrs. Winn, Rimmer, Gilmour and McLennan, all recommend the enlargement of the St. Lawrence canals in general and the Beauharnois Canal in particular. And, with Mr. Lanthier's permis- sion, I beg to state that the Commissioner's Report of 24th February, 1871, recommends the enlargement of that canal, and *not the construction of a new one on the north side of the river*:—"A great difference of opinion has existed," they say, "ever since the com- mencement of the undertaking, and still continues to exist, in reference to the best route; many contend that for *military purposes*, the canal should have been located on the north side; while others are of opinion that its natural position is the one it now occupies. The Commissioners have no intention of discussing this question."

At page 79 of their report, the Commis- sioners recommend the enlargement of the St. Lawrence Canals, (one of which, clearly, is the Beauharnois,) the estimated cost of which, they state, will be \$3,150,000.

Mr Masson asserts that the Commission- ers were not authorised to report upon the necessity of a north shore canal. I main- tain, however, that according to their in- structions, Mr. Masson's assertion is not justified. The Commissioners were author- ized to enquire generally into the best means of attracting the great Western trade to Canada, viz:—

"To institute and make a thorough

enquiry as to the best means of affording such access to the sea-board as may be calculated to attract a large and yearly increasing share of the trade of the North-Western portion of North America through Canadian waters, as well as a thorough and comprehensive improvement of the canal system of our said Dominion, on such a scale and of such a character as would best tend to afford ample facilities for the expansion and due development of its growing trade and commerce; and in such enquiry, to consider the whole subject, in all its bearings, as well in a commercial as in an engineering point of view, with the object of obtaining such reliable information thereupon as may furnish the necessary data on which to base a plan for the improvement of the canal system of our said Dominion, of a comprehensive character, and of such kind as will enable Canada to compete successfully for the transit trade of the great Western country, and especially to enquire into the public works and improvements hereinafter enumerated, that is to say, etc."

It may further be stated that in 1871 the Hon. Mr. Langevin reported that the Commissioners had declined to consider this question, and had recommended the enlargement of the Beauharnois canal: "With reference to this canal," said the hon. gentleman, "while declining to consider the question as to whether it should be located on the north or south side of the river, the Commissioners recommend its enlargement to the standard fixed for the Welland Canal."

Mr. Lanthier states that Sir Hugh Allan and the wholesale trade signed an address requiring the construction of a canal at the Cedars. Mr. Lanthier must be certainly aware that a petition in a contrary sense was signed by such commercial houses and companies as Messrs. Sincennes & McNaughton, the Auger Shipping Company, the Montreal and Ottawa Forwarding Company, the Ottawa and Rideau Company, &c. And would Mr. Lanthier even boast that the Montreal Board of Trade is favourable to the Cedars Canal?

Sir Hugh Allan's opinion may be a standard authority in mercantile matters; but in the present case it should not be accepted without reserve. I prefer the opinion expressed by Sir Hugh in 1871, as Chairman of the Canal Commissioners. At that time he had no idea of being President of the Pacific Railway Company; he was not thinking of the

contract; nor did he foresee the constant and serious difficulties which would be raised in connection with the Northern Colonization Railroad; and who will deny that at some accidental and happy meeting, Sir Hugh may not have said to the member for Soulanges, or to his friends—"Assist me and I will assist you."

Besides, as President of the Canadian Navigation Company, Sir Hugh Allen must be interested in the construction of a canal at the Cedars, seeing that, in so far as the company's large steamers are concerned, the two ravines would be preferable to a continuous land-cut canal and would put an end to the carrying of goods in barges and sailing vessels.

In short, when the Canadian Government, in 1872, proposed to ratify the Washington Treaty, on conditions that Great Britain should guarantee a Canadian loan of £4,000,000, the only question involved was that of the enlargement of our canals; and the loan was asked for, and authorized by the Imperial Government, with the distinct understanding that it was to be applied to the construction of the Pacific Railway and to the improvement and enlargement of the Canadian canals.

To sum up the historical part of the question:—The south bank, having been originally recommended, whether by the French engineer or the Canadian surveyor referred to by Messrs. Killaly and Harwood, as the best for locating the canal, (regarded either in point of economy or of navigation,) was also recommended by Messrs. Stevenson, Baird, D. Thompson, Keefer, Tate, Killaly, and the Canadian Government; it was subsequently approved by the Imperial Government; it was not condemned by the engineers LaRue and H. G. Thompson. In spite of what Mr. Masson may say on the subject, it is not to be supposed for a moment that all those gentlemen were ignorant, dishonest, bribed men.

The north bank was recommended by Messrs. Mills, Wright, and Phillpotts, merely from military considerations; while it received Mr. Casey's favourable opinion for money consideration.

The Beauharnois Canal received the tacit approbation of the Special Committee, and the formal assent of the Legislative Assembly, who voted the necessary funds for its construction.

Mr. Lanthier declares that the history of the Beauharnois Canal contains one of the foulest pages in our Parliamentary history. On behalf of such names as Moffatt, Bou-

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thillier, McNab, La Fontaine, Berthelot, Tache, Papineau, De Witt, Tachereau, Cuvillier, Viger, Smith, Hincks, Aylwin, Baldwin, Quesnel, and of many other honourable members of equal integrity who composed the Legislative Assembly of that time, I challenge the present member for Soulanges to prove the grave charge he brings against the character of the people's representatives.

Nothing more is required to convince the disinterested or impartial reader, that the objections now raised against the enlargement of the Beauharnois Canal, exist only in the imagination of persons who are more interested in the commercial local progress of the Cascades, the Cedars, the Coteau and adjacent country parts, than in the general prosperity of the country at large. With such historical authority—which is more weighty by far than mere reasoning from supposition—is it not surprising that such journals as the *Minerve*, the *Gazette*, and a few others, influenced by example, should espouse a cause long since debated and disposed of by their predecessors; and that too, without even waiting for a report of a fresh survey, which might warrant a change of opinion.

THE SEASON OF NAVIGATION IS LONGEST ON THE SOUTH SIDE.

The Stevenson line was adopted on account of its superiority over all the proposed lines, considered either as to trade and navigation, or in point of economy. Its entire length, being only 11½ miles, proves it to be the shortest route. This fact cannot be denied, and was admitted by all engineers concerned, including Mr. Casey himself. The following is a tabular statement of the length of the respective routes:

	Miles
The Mills route, inland and river..	14 54
Entire inland route along the north bank	14 52
The Harwood route.....	15 ½
The Stevenson route or Beauharnois Canal	11 ½
The Baird route, via River St. Louis.	15 60

Not only is the distance shortest, but the number of locks is also less; consequently navigation through the Beauharnois Canal must be more expeditious than it could be through a canal on the north shore. The Mills route is an admitted impracticability, owing to the strong river current and insufficiency of water in the ravine at Pointe-

au-Moulin; and a north shore canal should be entirely inland along the bank of the river. The following is the number of locks shewn in the respective proposed routes:

	Lock
Beauharnois Canal.....	9
Entire inland route along the north....	10
Harwood route.....	11
Mills route.....	9
Baird route.....	9

Notwithstanding the statements made to the contrary by Messrs. Lanthier, Harwood and Masson, the Beauharnois Canal affords longer seasons of navigation than could possibly be obtained through any north shore canal, because the ice takes sooner and remains longer in the calm shallow bay at the foot of the Cascades. These facts have been proven, not by inhabitants of St. Zotique, who loudly clamour for the construction of a canal at the Cedars, but by strangers who are equally familiar with the peculiarities of those localities. The circumstantial affidavit of Mr. Monarque, of Lachine, the evidence of Mr. D'Aoust, of Montreal, a native of Isle Perrot, Mr. Ouellette, of Lachine, one of our oldest pilots, of Mr. J. B. Auger, President of a powerful forwarding company, —one of our oldest and most experienced river navigators, and highly interested in canal improvements—(published in the *Minerve*)—will defy the combined statements, contradictions or denials of my opponents.

It is stated that this Spring, 1873, the channel was opened on the north earlier than on the south side. It is a remarkable fact that the water of the Ottawa River rose about the same time with the St. Lawrence; yet notwithstanding the contrary statement made in the *Minerve* recently, the foot of the Cascades was free from ice only on the 24th. inst., and the Bay at Valleyfield was opened to navigation on the 25th instant. At all events, the Beauharnois Canal (as usual) will be opened this year earlier than the Lachine Canal. In fact, a telegram received here on Saturday, the 26th, gave intelligence that the Beauharnois Canal will be opened on the 28th April. Yet it is scarcely fair to take any single or even two years for a comparison; a series of years would alone give satisfaction.

In reference to this subject Mr. Lanthier remarks:—"This main fact, if true, would have been signalized with much strength before a committee where everything was being done to the detriment of

the north bank." I would direct the Hon. member's attention to the following sentence contained in the "long document" he pretends to have carefully examined:—To the 83rd question before the Special Committee: "What do you think is generally the difference of time in the breaking up of the bourdage ice on the north and the south side in the spring and in the formation of the ice in the fall?" Mr. DeWitt said: "That the navigation is open two or three weeks longer on the Beauharnois side in the fall, and opens two or three weeks earlier in the spring." The fact was also established by Messrs—Manuel, Leduc, Larocque and others.

In a comparative statement of advantages and disadvantages of the two river banks, Mr. Keefer observed, on the 10th Oct., 1842, "that a canal on the south side can be navigated two or three weeks more every season than on the north side." In his report dated 14th February of the same year, Mr. Keefer states, in alluding to the south shore:—"The line is continuous and away from the river, free from the disturbing causes of ice and high water."

What does Mr. Mills himself say on this important point? "It is generally agreed," said he, "that the St. Lawrence is open two or three weeks earlier in Spring, and later in Fall than the Ottawa—the St. Lawrence passing through a more southern latitude." This accounts for Mr. Mills recommending the river route, and condemning the inland route on the north shore.

Mr. Masson, who, by-the-way, I omitted to state, has only been in opposition to the Beauharnois Canal since the date of the removal of his residence from St. Anicet to Coteau—asks Mr. Cowley whether he ignores that not only in the fall "but also in each spring of the year, navigation is retarded for several days, if not three weeks, as he states, by the heaps of thick ice which," adds Mr. Masson, "accumulate in the Bay of Valleyfield?"

Mr. Masson asks further:—"Does Mr. Cowley ignore that the Department of Public Works was frequently compelled, in order to hasten the opening of navigation, to blow up the ice in the said bay by means of gun-powder or glycerine, and by steam battering-rams when gun-powder failed to accomplish the desired object? If Mr. Cowley declines to accept my statements, I have only to refer him to our worthy Engineer-in-Chief, Mr. Page, who will fully satisfy him on these points."

This, indeed, is news; and, what is very remarkable, those assertions are supported by affidavits!

The *Minerve* stated, a few days ago, that the entrance to the Beauharnois canal was dangerous, owing to the high winds which constantly prevailed from Lake St. Francis. But, according to Mr. Masson's version, that entrance is so very calm, that ice does not break up until midsummer, so to speak, and only then by means of scientific appliances! I am authorised to say, by the most respectable residents of the locality, who have annually witnessed the opening of the Beauharnois canal since 1846, that Mr. Masson has been altogether misinformed. Moreover, I have myself obtained personal interviews—not with Mr. Page, who happened to be at too great a distance—but with persons equally competent to supply the required information and equally worthy of belief, and from them I have learned that, on one occasion (about 1861)—and one only—the Department despatched some gunpowder to Valleyfield, with the object of hastening the "break-up," which, that year, had been a few days later than usual; but, before the powder arrived at Valleyfield, the ice had broken up and moved off during a single night.

To sum up, the following comparative statement of the opening of the two adjacent canals to that of Beauharnois, will serve to show the value of the affidavits recently published by Mr. Lauthier:—

OPENING OF CANALS.

<i>Lachine.</i>		<i>Beauharnois.</i>		<i>Cornwall.</i>		
1846	May	6	April	16	April	20
1847	"	5	May	5	May	1
1848	April	24	April	12	April	7
1849	"	21	"	19	"	7
1850	"	22	"	26	"	20
1851	"	22	"	25	"	25
1852	May	7	May	2	May	1
1853	"	20	April	29	April	29
1854	"	16	May	1	"	30
1855	"	1	"	1	"	30
1856	"	1	"	1	"	28
1857	"	4	"	2	May	1
1858	April	25	April	26	April	26
1859	"	21	"	19	"	20
1860	"	20	"	19	"	21
1861	"	24	"	24	"	24
1862	May	4	"	30	May	1
1863	"	4	May	2	"	4
1864	April	25	April	24	April	27

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OPENING OF CANALS—continued.

Lachine.	Beauharnois.	Cornwall.
1865 May 1	April 25	April 26
1866 " 2	" 30	" 30
1867 " 1	" 29	May 1
1868 April 27	" 27	April 27
1869 May 3	May 3	May 3
1870 April 29	April 28	April 28
1871 " 24	" 24	" 24
1872 May 1	May 1	May 1

There is more eloquence in the foregoing figures than in all the statements made on the subject by Messrs. Lanthier and Masson; they are more conclusive than the affidavits produced from their county friends; they clearly demonstrate that the opening of the Beauharnois canal, instead of being later than the others, is, on an average, earlier; and that all assertions made to the contrary—whether by correspondence or affidavit, are based upon mere supposition, or prompted by self-interest alone.

Compared with the Lachine Canal, the closing of the Beauharnois appears to be a few days later. But, when it is considered that the water in the Lachine Canal is kept almost in perpetual motion by steamers and vessels passing to and from the Ottawa river, as well as by those which pass through the Beauharnois canal, and others, again, which do not require to pass through it; that of the 41,938 passages through the Lachine Canal in the years 1859 to 1866, inclusive, 6,393 were steamers, as against 39,449 passages through the Beauharnois canal in the same period of time—that the Lachine Canal is the shortest by three miles; that it has only five locks, the two lowest having a depth of sixteen feet of water on the sills; that its current is more rapid; and finally, that numerous mills and manufacturing along its banks receive their power from this canal—all tending to keep its water in constant motion, and retard congelation—it may reasonably be supposed that the Beauharnois Canal, when enlarged and traversed as much as the Lachine, will be enabled to fix its dates of closing at the same time.

In order fully to comprehend the following table, it should be further observed that the Lachine Canal is kept open to the latest possible date, so as to enable the numerous steamers plying the river below and in the vicinity of Montreal, to take up their winter quarters in the canal basin :—

DATE OF CLOSING OF THE CANALS.

Lachine.	Beauharnois.	Cornwall.	Williamsburgh.	St. Ann's.
1846 Dec. 9	Nov. 29	Dec. 2		Nov. 29
1847 " 13	" 28	" 4		" 30
1848 " 11	" 30	" 9	Dec. 6	" 30
1849 " 10	Dec. 8	" 6	" 15	Dec. 6
1850 " 7	" 4	" 7	" 10	" 6
1851 " 10	Nov. 25	" 12	Nov. 25	Nov. 24
1852 " 16	Dec. 13	" 16	" 24	Dec. 15
1853 " 2	Nov. 24	" 10	Dec. 1	Nov. 28
1854 " 2	Dec. 2	" 18	" 15	Dec. 22
1855 Nov. 28	Nov. 28	" 18	" 15	Nov. 27
1856 Dec. 3	Dec. 1	" 6	" 6	Dec. 1
1857 Nov. 20	Nov. 26	" 12	" 12	" 4
1858 Dec. 1	" 26	" 7	" 11	Nov. 29
1859 Nov. 30	" 29	" 7	" 5	" 24
1860 Dec. 5	Dec. 3	" 10	" 10	Dec. 2
1861 " 4	" 3	" 12	" 10	" 2
1862 " 6	Nov. 30	" 12	Nov. 30	" 2
1863 " 10	Dec. 4	" 12	Dec. 7	" 5
1864 " 10	" 3	" 10	" 10	" 1
1865 " 12	" 7	" 13	" 13	" 5
1866 " 13	" 6	" 13	" 11	" 6
1867 " 2	" 2	" 1	" 6	" 3
1868 " 5	" 2	" 5	" 8	Nov. 27
1869 " 7	Nov. 30	" 7	" 3	" 21
1870 " 10	Dec. 5	" 8	" 6	" 1
1871 " 6	" 2	Dec. 8	Dec. 6	Nov. 7
1872 " 1	Nov. 28			

The risks of navigation, dating from 25th November, are generally so great, that the Beauharnois Canal may be considered as opened to trade and navigation, in the fall, to as late a date as the Lachine and Williamsburgh Canals. But even supposing—after its enlargement—the Beauharnois were to close some days sooner than the Lachine, would that be a sufficient reason to condemn it and prefer a north shore canal whose outlet must be into the calm shallow water at the cascades, where navigation every spring and fall would be retarded and lessened to a much greater extent than at Beauharnois?

Mr. Lanthier may possibly be able to explain how it happens that the St. Ann's Lock, barely an eighth of a mile in extent, and situated at the foot of a pretty strong current, is closed every season before any of the canals on the St. Lawrence—a fact established beyond all doubt by the figures in the foregoing table.

Mr. Lanthier asks:—"Why were 174 working days lost at the Beauharnois Canal, between the years 1846 and 1867, taking for comparison the Cornwall Canal during the same period of time?" Supposing his figures to be correct, the reply to his question is not difficult. The conditions of the Cornwall are very different from those of the Beauharnois, as regards climate and location. Situated more to the West, it is open

Cornwall.

April 20
May 1
April 7
" 7
" 20
" 25
May 1
April 29
" 30
" 30
" 28
May 1
April 26
" 20
" 21
" 24
May 1
" 4
April 27

to navigation later than either the Lachine or Beauharnois Canals. This result, proved by the figures in the foregoing table, is also due to the *dimensions* of the Cornwall Canal, the latter having but *seven* locks against *nine* in the Beauharnois. The locks in the Cornwall Canal are 200 feet in length by 55 in width, while those of the Beauharnois are 200 by 45 only. The width of the Cornwall, at bottom, is 100 feet by 150 at the surface, against 80 and 120 in the Beauharnois.

The mere mention of these details will suffice to show the advantages possessed by the Cornwall canal, in point of safety and navigation, not only over the Beauharnois, but over all the canals on the St. Lawrence, with the exception of the Welland. This is so patent that even the Williamsburg canals, situated some miles further west than the Cornwall, but whose dimensions are less, do not afford the same number of working days.

Mr. Lanthier may probably say that my reply to his question is not satisfactory; therefore, in the public interest, I will take the liberty of asking him one or two questions:—1st. Why did the Lachine canal, which is more rapid and three miles less in length than either the Beauharnois or Cornwall canals, lose 172 working days during the years 1846 to 1867, taking for comparison the working days of the Cornwall canal during the same period of time? 2nd. How many working days would the proposed Cedars canal lose annually, taking for comparison *any* of the canals on the St. Lawrence?

THE WATER IN THE BEAUHARNOIS CANAL.

Statistics indicating the depth of water on the floor of certain locks in the under-mentioned three canals (prepared by the Department of Public Works, for points of comparison, at low-water seasons) prove that the Beauharnois Canal is not only equal in efficiency to either the Lachine or Cornwall canals; but, that it is the best adapted for the required enlargement.

The following statement does not give the depth of water at the lower mitre sills, as there is always over nine feet of water there:—

COMPARATIVE DEPTH OF WATER IN THE CANALS. UPPER MITRE SILLS.

Year.	Month	Lowest Water.		
		Lachine. Lock 5. ft. & ins.	Beauh'ois. Lock 14. ft. & ins.	Cornwall. Lock 21. ft. & ins.
1849	Sept.	9.10½	10.7	9.2
"	Oct.	9.10	10.4	8.6
"	Nov.	9.10	10.11	9.0
1850	Sept.	9.8	11.2	9.1
"	Oct.	9.10	11.2	8.11
"	Nov.	9.9	10.10	8.0
1854	Oct.	9.11	11.9	9.9
"	Nov.	9.10	11.6	9.3
1865	Oct.	9.4	11.3	9.4
"	Nov.	9.6	11.3	9.1
1871	Sept.	9.9	11.8	
"	Oct.	9.1	11.1	
"	Nov.	8.10	11.0	

Alluding to the water level of the Lachine and Beauharnois canals, in 1871, the Hon. Mr. Langevin observed:—"From the month of September, the St. Lawrence River was so low that the gates of the guard lock had to be kept opened during the day until the close of navigation, to admit the greatest possible flow of water to supply the canal and mills." According to the report of the Hon. Minister, it would appear that no scarcity of water was felt in the Beauharnois Canal, for he states that "the working of this canal was efficiently maintained throughout the season, notwithstanding the low water in the St. Lawrence." This report was based upon that of Mr. Sippell, our worthy Superintending Engineer, who expressed himself in the following more precise terms:—"The low water in the St. Lawrence River had no effect on the efficient working of this canal, which was supplied with the full draft of nine feet on the sills throughout the year, except at the lower entrance, where there was a difficulty which has since been removed."

COST OF THE CEDARS CANAL.

Messrs. Lanthier and Masson tell us that the Beauharnois canal cost a fabulous sum; that it was found necessary to erect light-houses and to construct numerous piers, wharves and dams, in order to render the canal possible of access and passage. They tell us, also, that shipwrecks are a common occurrence; and, therefore, they have come to the conclusion that the selection of the south shore in 1842 was a great mistake.

Supposing for a moment that the picture

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These gent habitants of yourselves," closing your for small traf Valleyfield i navigation; shipwrecks as sert it does, h small light v inconsistency hollowness i opponents.

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10.4	8.6
10.11	9.0
1.2	9.1
1.2	8.11
0.10	8.0
1.9	9.9
1.6	9.3
1.3	9.4
1.3	9.1
1.8	
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men, in the construction and working of
this canal, is not overdrawn, would it
suffice to justify the country in dropping
the fruits of past expenditure, and under-
taking the construction of a new canal on the
north shore, instead of enlarging the pre-
sent canal? The immense sums alluded to
by Messrs. Lanthier and Masson have all
been paid, and therefore, so much the less
will the Dominion have to provide.

These gentlemen kindly console the in-
habitants of Beauharnois! "Do not alarm
yourselves," they say, "we do not propose
closing your canal; we desire to preserve it
for small traffic." But, if the entrance to
Valleyfield is so frightfully dangerous to
navigation; if it occasions such terrible
shipwrecks and even loss of life as they as-
sert it does, how can they recommend it for
small light vessels? This is the greatest
inconsistency and most palpable proof of
hollowness in the objections raised by our
opponents.

Now, what in reality did the Beauharnois
Canal cost? On the 1st July, 1867, the
entire cost amounted to \$1,611,424, of
which sum \$2,783 were paid for dams at
Valleyfield and Isle-aux-Chats, and \$254,-
807 for damages by inundation of farms at
Hungry Bay. Up to the same period (1st
July, 1867), the Lachine Canal had cost
\$2,587,552; the Cornwall Canal, \$1,933,-
152; the Williamsburg Canals, \$1,320,665.
All these canals were constructed about the
same time; and, with the exception of the
Lachine and Williamsburg, they all met
with nearly the same difficulties. The
Williamsburg canals happened to be singu-
larly favoured by the great natural advan-
tages presented by the river bank, which
will account for the comparatively low cost
of their construction.

Messrs. Lanthier and Masson, who have
so much to say and gainsay respecting the
Beauharnois Canal, take great care to say
nothing about the probable cost of their pet
Cedars Canal. This is a point, certainly,
worth while examining, and one upon
which those gentlemen should have en-
lightened the public. I am no engineer; I
have not even access to the Parliament
Library, nor to the Board of Engineers of
the Public Works Department; but I find
in the "long document" to which Mr.
Lanthier has alluded certain estimates de-
serving public attention.

THE CEDARS CANAL.

(Probable cost of its construction based upon
estimates made over thirty years ago.)

MR. MILL'S ESTIMATE—1833.

Mill's Route, apart from the pur-
chase of land and planking of
ravine barks

£235,782
Inland Route
324,943
Harwood Route
442,763

MR. KEEFER'S ESTIMATE.

The Mills' Route, estimate of 1841. £255,900

Do. do, do, 1842. 354,490

N.B.—Mr. Killaly stated before the Special
Committee in 1842, that Mr. Keefer's esti-
mate of 1841 was brought before the House
with the distinct understanding that the
canal was to be located on the south shore.
It was without doubt for this reason that
Mr. Keefer inserted a foot note, stating that
the cost of a south shore canal would be
£50,000 less than one on the north.

COLONEL PHILLPOTT'S ESTIMATE, 1839.

The Mills' Route, apart from the
cost of planking the banks of
the two Ravines

£415,900

DAVID M. THOMPSON'S ESTIMATE, 1842.

The Mills' Route

£415,553

HON. MR. KILLALY'S ESTIMATE, 1842.

The Mills' Route

£329,838

The foregoing figures supply more infor-
mation as to the pretended advantages
possessed by the north shore, than anything
to be said on the subject by Messrs. Lanthier
and Masson. The average estimates show
that in 1842 the Cedars canal would have
cost, by the Mills route, about £400,000,
and about a fourth more if the inland route
along the river bank had been adopted.
Comparing things as they existed thirty
years ago, with our position to-day, what
do we find? Everything has enhanced in
price—timber facilities are far removed
—the cost of manual labour has tripled
itself, while that of mechanics is nearly
quadrupled—iron and other materials in
general have doubled in cost. Taking all
this into account, the member for Soulan-
ges may calculate with a degree of certainty
that the Dominion Parliament would neither
satisfy him nor his constituents in the
demand they are making, unless they are
prepared to incur an expenditure of over
\$4,000,000—a sum which would be more

than sufficient (according to the Commissioners Report of 1871) to enlarge all the canals on the St. Lawrence, and improve the navigation of the rapids.

It has been also stated that the entrance to the Beauharnois Canal is *solid rock*. Now, according to all the Reports of Engineers who have surveyed that locality up to the present time, the bottom or bed of the river at that entrance, from the head of the canal to *La Grosse Pointe*, is shown to consist of clay and stone, or, to use Mr. Keefer's own words, "clay, with a few boulders," which could be easily removed.

THE DIFFICULTIES OF CONSTRUCTING A CANAL ON THE NORTH SHORE.

Taking into consideration the length of the contemplated north shore canal, and the engineering difficulties which would have attended its construction, the estimates submitted by these engineers appear to have been reasonable and moderate.

I have no intention of entering into the details of those difficulties; they are all minutely described and carefully considered in the various documents which accompany the Report made by the Special Committee in 1842. The re-production here of all the opinions then given by the engineers employed in connection with that enterprise, however interesting they might be, would occupy too many pages to justify me in imposing so much upon the patience of the reader. Suffice it to say, that the main difficulties comprise:—The peculiar nature of the soil, which is clay and quicksand; excavation of the ravines; their rapid currents; the staying of the embankments; the construction of piers and of pathways for hauling purposes; the construction of aqueducts to the Rivers Rouge, de l'Isle and a La Grasse; the removal of rock at Coteau and at the foot of the Cascades; the difference of water level between Lakes St. Francis and St. Louis, which is higher on the north side than on the south, &c., &c.

But the inferiority of the north shore as compared with the south, is still more forcibly exhibited in the opinion of Mr. Mills himself, who considers it to be impossible to construct by land a canal along the ravines or on the river bank. These are his own words:—"Above the Cedars, the banks are from twenty to thirty feet high, composed of clay, with some veins of sand, frequently sliding off in very large bodies, showing the destruction which would be

consequent upon constructing a canal along or near its foot, or upon the top. Here also, below the Cedars, it would be impossible, with any reasonable expense, to maintain a canal, either upon or at the foot of the bank of the river, on account of the great bodies of it which frequently slide into the ravine."

Mr. Mills' friend (Mr. Wright) also observes:—"The shores are a formation of clay and loam, underlaid with quicksand, which occasions, yearly, very considerable slides; and a canal carried on such ground would be in great danger if anywhere near the river."

And Mr. Casey says:—"With reference to the wash of the ravine, the canal will require cleaning out ten times oftener than the ravine, owing to the great additional depth and width."

This peculiarity of soil afforded one of the principal reasons which induced Messrs. Mills and Wright to recommend the adoption of the two ravines in the river route.

However, the canal by the ravines would not meet the exigencies of trade. Mr. Casey, who agrees on this point with Messrs. Mills and Wright, says that *this is a steamboat canal*. Messrs. Keefer, Baird and Thompson coincide with this view. There is no doubt that the trade of the Dominion, as well as that of the United States, require canals open to the navigation of barges and schooners, as well as to that of steamers and propellers. If my opponents doubt this fact, let them consult the Appendix to the Report of the Canal Commissioners of 1871.

THE MILITARY VIEW OF THE QUESTION.

One word now in reference to the objection raised against the Beauharnois Canal, based upon military considerations. I feel certain that neither Messrs. Lanthier or Masson, nor even the patriotic Dr. Fortier, claim to be more national or devoted to the British Crown than the late Governor-General, Sir Charles Bagot. And here is what His Excellency said in reply to an address presented by the loyal inhabitants of Soulanges (with Mr. Simpson at their head), in which it was represented to His Excellency that the Beauharnois Canal was an *enormous blunder*, in a military point of view:—

"Assuming," he said, "Canada to be invaded from the United States by the line of Lake Champlain, the battle will have to be fought on the south shore of the St. Lawrence.

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Canada to be in- s by the line of will have to be he St. Lawrence.

Any force which could drive Her Majesty's troops across the river would have little difficulty in getting possession of Montreal, which is undefended. But, in such a case, the canal in question would afford the invaders no advantages or facilities of any kind. It would never be used for the transport of troops or stores to Montreal, because such troops or stores could be sent down the rapids, which are perfectly navigable downwards, with much greater ease and quickness. It would not be used for ascending vessels, because it would be much more easy to communicate with the States by the Richelieu and Lake Champlain. It would not affect the communication between Upper and Lower Canada, because that is secured by the Ottawa and Rideau, which, in case of war, must always be the line of communication. It would be subject, if taken, to be injured or destroyed; but in the improbable event of our being driven from the south shore, the canals on the north would be scarcely more secure; they would, of course, be the objects of attack, and it would be impossible to protect them from a force which, it is assumed, would have been powerful enough to drive the British army across the frontier."

Besides, it is a well known fact that the Cornwall Canal is within the range of American gun-shot, at several points along its line, and more particularly so from Barnhart and Chimney Islands. Consequently, it is absurd to suppose for an instant that, in case of war, the St. Lawrence Canals—especially a canal at the Cedars—could be of any utility.

CONCLUSION.

To sum up this discussion, the whole question appears to me to resolve itself into this:—Will the enlargement of the Beauharnois Canal, and the deepening of the entrance at Valleyfield, cost less money than the construction of a new canal on the north shore of the river—and how much? Even supposing it to be shown that the enlargement will cost more, the public should be assured, before adopting the north shore enterprise, that the seasons of navigation on that side of the river will not be shorter than they are on the south side—keeping in view the existence of the Ottawa River, and the peculiarities attaching to the locality at the foot of the Cascades. Such a calculation can only be undertaken by competent and disinterested engineers, after making scientific surveys on both sides of the river.

At the request of Mr. Lanthier—for he himself informs us that "the Legislature, intending to discuss during the present session the question of river improvements on the St. Lawrence, he seized the opportunity of inducing the Executive and the Assembly to correct the blunder of 1842"—the Dominion Government ordered a new survey to be made last fall. Mr. Crawford was entrusted with the examination of Lake St. Francis, while the survey of the north bank of the river was undertaken by Mr. Baillarge, assisted by Mr. Farigenea.

Mr. Harwood tells us that Mr. Baillarge's report will be "*an honest and disinterested one.*" Mr. Lanthier says that I insinuate or suspect that Mr. Baillarge has been *bought*. Neither of those assertions have any foundation. No one disputes that Mr. Baillarge is an *honest man*, nor will any one credit the statement that he has been *bribed*. But I deny that he is a *disinterested* party in the premises. I have already stated that Mr. Baillarge must be interested, inasmuch as he not only is a resident at the Cedars, but that he owns property there, and his family connections are all there. Have my statements on this point ever been refuted? The disinterestedness claimed for Mr. Baillarge is of such a nature that Mr. Harwood, in a letter published in the *Minerve* on the 27th March last, is able to announce in advance that his report "would shortly be submitted to the House, *when it would be seen that it would correspond with that of Messrs. Mills and Casey.*" Neither the country, nor the Beauharnois County, will accept the decision of such an important case by such a judge. In all civilized nations an *expert* may be recused by reason of his being an interested party in the case. Judges of the highest Court are not permitted to act in matters in which they are personally interested—themselves, their wives, their children, their parents, or their first cousins. Shall it not be permitted to recuse a public expert on the ground of being individually interested, to say nothing of the interest which attaches to his cousins? Such a pretension is too monstrous and dangerous in its consequences to receive any intelligent or impartial public approbation.

When a heavy expenditure of the people's money is about to be made for public improvements—such, for instance, as for the enlargement of a canal already in good working order, or the construction of a new one instead—it becomes above all things necessary that even a suspicion of serving private interests should be removed. If

the deepening of the Bay at Valleyfield is found to present difficulties of a more serious nature than those discovered to exist in the proposed canal at the Cedars, let the points be established by Engineers, who have no local interests to serve. The people have too much confidence in the integrity of the present Government, and in the intelligence of its Parliament to suppose for a moment that Mr. Baillarge's report will be adopted by either one body or the other.

If the survey of the localities in question be only entrusted to competent strangers, I have no fears for the result—it will be as it ever has been before, viz: that the south shore is the best, whether considered in point of economy or in reference to trade and navigation. The words of Mr. Killaly, as stated before the Special Committee in 1842, may be here repeated—and he spoke them having a perfect knowledge of the subject:—"I am convinced that if twice

the number of Engineers were to make surveys and reports upon the subject, no other conclusion can be come to than that which I firmly maintain, viz: that the line of canal on the south side now in progress, is greatly superior in point of efficiency to any line on the north side."

Before the idea of constructing a canal at the Cedars can be seriously entertained, it must be demonstrated that the trade of the country requires a double chain of canals along the whole of the St. Lawrence—a necessity which may probably be felt at no distant day—but even then, it may not be without interest to consider whether a canal by the "Baird route" via the St. Louis River, from Hungry Bay to the Town of Beauharnois, may not be of greater advantage than a canal on the north shore of the river.

D. GIROUARD.

